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ABSTRACT

This multicultural education supplementary curriculum provides educators with a means of expressing those human qualities that inspired them to choose their profession: namely, kindness, acceptance, and understanding. It does so by enabling them to identify and meet the diverse racial and cultural backgrounds and needs of their students. Simply, a child's culture is a major factor in his or her learning process, and is at the heart of a child's development of a self-concept. Minority children, particularly, must be taught, through meaningful experience, that they are "as good as everyone else." The following curriculum areas might be revamped to include multicultural concepts: (1) art, which helps the child express individuality; (2) health education; (3) language arts, which provides opportunities for children to communicate with others; (4) mathematics, a subject that many children are naturally interested in, and can easily share with adults; (5) music, an easily enjoyable experience that can serve as a primary source of motivation for learning; (6) science, which should involve "hands on" experiences; (7) social studies, which cuts across most of the subject areas and addresses directly questions of human cooperation; and (8) physical education, which also encourages a positive self-concept. At the foundation of multicultural education is the development of character, and school curricula can encourage this by simultaneously challenging and affording success. (KH)

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MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION SUPPLEMENTARY CURRICULUM

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MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION SUPPLEMENTARY CURRICULUM

The major aim of this supplementary curriculum is to help educators to express those human qualities that have served as a spiritual force to inspire them to become educators who contribute to molding the lives of all children. This work is based on the belief that the human instinct that stimulates an individual to become an educator is an indication of unique human characteristics--namely kindness, caring, loving, accepting, and understanding. This work explores some of the most perplexing factors which cause problems for teachers and students in the educational system throughout the United States. Cultural diversity is treated by providing educational activities. This is designed to expand the awareness of teachers and administrators of the cultural diversity in American society.

All educators must evaluate their attitudes toward culturally different people on a daily basis, to ensure that they are not guilty of discriminating against any student for a biological characteristic for which they have no control--namely race, sex, or handicap. Multicultural Education can be beneficial to educators to enhance personal improvement and self-awareness. Teaching techniques and multicultural activities can be implemented while teaching any of the subject areas for grades kindergarten through twelve. These techniques and activities can help teachers to become the effective educators they want to be.

This world is filled with beautiful people of different ages, colors, sizes, customs, traditions, and cultures. We have so much to share with each other. Yet, many teachers are suffering from "teacher burn out"; and, many children are making failing grades in school. The federal and state government are spending large amounts of money on remedial programs. The fact still remains, however, that the academic level of many children is constantly decreasing. It is depressing to observe some teachers in the classrooms--hard working individuals who are frustrated from work with children they cannot seem to reach.

The solution to many of the problems in the American schools lies in the implementation of multicultural education in educational curricula at all academic levels. Teachers are asking what is multicultural education. This is a divergent question because the Multicultural Education thrust is far too complex for a single answer or definition. It has been defined in professional journals, seminars, and by many who are concerned about the educational opportunities provided for the student population that the schools serve. The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education has defined it as follows:

> Multicultural education is preparation for the social, political, and economic realities that an individual experiences in a culturally diverse society and complex human encounters. These realities have both national and international dimensions. This preparation provides a process by which an individual develops competencies for perceiving, believing, evaluating, and behaving in differential cultural settings. Multicultural education is an ongoing process to help educators and individuals become more responsive to the human condition, individual cultural integrity, and cultural pluralism in society.

Traditionally, the major responsibility of a teacher is to identify and meet each student's academic needs. Consequently, the only way of obtaining this goal is to make one's instructions responsive to the racial and cultural backgrounds of the students in respective classes. Curricula and instructional materials must promote appreciation and acceptance of racial and cultural diversity. Whether one is teaching in a multicultural or monocultural school or classroom, an effective instructional approach must have a pluralistic focus.

Teachers are challenged in today's schools to break students from their hostility to those unlike themselves. The school system is challenged to produce curricula and instructional materials which will draw a child into an experience with a culture unlike his or her own. Only by seeing a culture on its own terms can the stereotypes and preconceptions be drawn away. Excellent methods of introducing children into a cultural experience are through books, films, artifacts, and the drama of a respective culture. Children who are drawn inside other cultures are capable of seeing American culture more clearly (Ferguson, May 1980).

Drawing children inside other cultures is not an easy task for some teachers because of their reluctance, or fear, to challenge in depth the beliefs and attitudes that are reflected in their thoughts and behavior. Many teachers prefer spending their time exploring educational concepts that do not have as many emotional implications as does the examination of prejudice and racism. It is easy for teachers to redirect their attention away from program goals focusing on the examination of racial and cultural values to goals which are less threatening (Grant, 1977).

Teachers need to realize that a child's culture is a major factor in his/her learning process. Our culture determines our learning styles and our life styles. Children are unique in many ways;however, cultural differences are probably the most misunderstood differences that teachers must know and understand (B. L. Broman, 1982). Culture is defined as all activities and achievements in society that individuals pass on from one generation to the next. Generally, a culture is divided into five categories:

1. Technology--the way people provide themselves and others with the necessities of life. The food they select are very different. Americans eat pork and beef, but we reject foods such as dogs, cats, rats, and snakes. Muslims and Orthodox Jews do not eat pork, Hindus do not eat beef, some East Africans find eggs unpalatable, and some Chinese do not drink milk (Brown 1963).

2. Institutions--homes, schools, government, religious groups, and other organizations.

3. Language types of speech suitable for special situations that convey meaning to the listener. In the United States, English is the primary language; however, in a class of thirty students there may be numerous English dialects. Teachers need to accept the native languages of all children and use love and understanding to enable them to make a smooth transition to the use of standard English. Educators must make an effort to understand the languagechildren use because rejecting someone's language can be perceived as ostracism.

4. Customs--special use of art, music, and dance. Cultural groups are unique in many ways. When teaching about cultures all aspects should be included.

5. Ideology--a guiding set of beliefs. For many children in schools, their sets of moral and value systems are very much different from that of their teachers. One is not better or worse than the other, only different. Consequently, the teacher will have to work on his/her attitude to accept those concepts.

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Self-Concepts

A child's self-concept is essentially a social product arising out of experiences with people: parents, sibling, relatives, teachers, peers, and the general community. "Self awareness does not happen all at once, but is a growth process which begins during infancy and early childhood. As all of the sensations about the child are interpreted by him, the process of self-concept begins" (Dinkmeyer, 1971).

Since one's self-concept is learned, teachers in the primary grades have an excellent opportunity to help young children develop positive self-concepts. Children at this age are filled with enthusiasm, love and innocence (Aspen, 1968). Many disadvantaged students, however, develop negative self-concepts by the end of their first year in school. The teacher's attitude, along with techniques and strategies used in interacting with children, can have a lasting effect on how children feel about themselves as they relate to others in this diverse society.

One of the obvious tasks of the teacher is to help these children learn through meaningful experience that they are "as good as everyone else" (Boyer, 1973). In contemporary society, the status and image of the minority is often a negative one, and the cue given to minority children is, "Your people are no good." The stigma attached to skin color is a major factor involved in prejudice and misunderstanding. It is the responsibility of educators to attempt to correct this misconception by helping minority children to realize their beauty; by creating an awareness of the likeness and differences of all people; and, by emphasizing the positive aspects of these likenesses and differences.

As stated by Charlotte Epsteing, "Issues in human relations have become inescapable. Dealing with intergroup relations through American schools today is no longer a matter of teaching preference. Instead, the achievement of better human relations through education is an imperative necessity which is vital to national welfare and to the development of individual human beings" (Boyd, 1979).

Teachers must gain the skills necessary to carry out their role in promoting better human relations through the total school program. In order to enhance the quality of life in our pluralistic society, it is vital that the learning process be designed to help learners better appreciate their own culture and to see other cultures as commendatory, and not as contradictory ways of organizing their own social world. This means drastic change in the educational process. As stated by Hogg and McCombs, "Not only must education itself adopt to cultural pluralism, it must educate the young for cultural pluralism."

The activities outlined in this supplementary curriculum are designed to help children relate to a specific subject area, while reinforcing the learning concept with a multicultural focus. The following information pertains to those subject areas which should include multicultural concepts.

ART

The function of teaching art in the multicultural curriculum is to give the child another method of self-expression. Just as music, drama, literature, and dance are means of self-expression, so is art. We do not expect to make artists of the children. Art helps the child to express self; the more this is done, the more a child

learns. Character, personality and good citizenship are developed and the child's life is enriched through this joyful and satisfying expression. The child learns to see and appreciate the beauty of people from many cultures with which he comes into contact daily. With seeing and appreciation comes understanding and accepting. This, in turn, enables the child to function as an effective human being in this society.

Since art is not busy work, there should be a purpose for each activity. It is the teacher's job to encourage, inspire, and help the child draw upon his/her imagination. A teacher should see to it that each child is learning and experiencing, and he/she should look at each child through his art work. This will tell the teacher much about the culture of a child.

It is the duty of the art teacher to set the stage for a child's art experiences, and to reflect on the art of people of different cultures.

HEALTH

The real wealth of our pluralistic nation is found in our children. Our future, as well as their future, depends upon both the quality and the quantity of their health education and their eventual resulting actions of doing what they believe is wiser and better for the benefit of all. Just as yesterday, today, and tomorrow are linked and are dependent upon each other, so are people: we all need each other. As educators, parents, or other guardians, our hopes and dreams are focused upon that tomorrow. Children, with adult help, can bring about this better tomorrow when humans will be treated equally for the benefit of all in our society.

There are those who truly believe that health education can change the world and each person in it. There are those who contend that this can only become a reality if education itself changes to become better and more meaningful to every individual. In spite of us, and in some cases because of us, rapid change is taking place in every phase of American life. There is a vital need for the world's people to live together in peace and to join together to conserve the resources of this nation for children, youth, and adults. Because of teachers, change can come about in health education that will lead to real and greatly needed improvement.

LANGUAGE ARTS

The Language Arts furnish the most important skills taught in education. It facilitates communication and thought. Language is transmitted from generation to generation through the cultures.

Language is learned through talking, listening, and responding. A learning environment that supports and encourages communication should be filled with materials for listening, viewing, reading, writing, and speaking. Language Arts skills are the major skills taught in pre-school. These are usually taught in context with all other subjects--science, math, social studies, art, music, and history, among others.

Children start developing language at birth from very early experiences through information gained through the senses. These senses are <u>hearing</u> --listening to adults reading in their environment; <u>seeing</u> --observing adults enjoying books and newspapers: and, <u>feeling</u>--touching different textures in objects. <u>Smelling</u> and <u>tasting</u> also make a contribution to language development in children

wher the adults in their environments explain the objects or foods they are smelling or tasting.

The major factor in Language Arts for children is to provide opportunities for them to communicate with others. Communication is not only talking or listening; it is also a meaningful exchange of ideas and intellectual operation between two people. The adult must learn to listen to the child as well as to talk to him/her.

In a conversation between an adult and a child, if the adult does all the talking and expects the child to listen, two things are happening, generally: (1) The child is not listening in most cases. (2) The child is learning that communication is meant to be one-sided. This child will probably develop poor communication skills.

Many adults communicate with children on two levels: (1) commanding and (2) questioning. Commanding is communication in which most of the statements are telling a child what to or not to do, such as, "Do not play in water"; or, "Please clean your feet before walking on the rug.

Children need to be encouraged to ask their own questions and to seek answers. An adult needs to question children skillfully by using a variety of techniques, such as those offered by Landreth, (1981).

1. Perceptual--questions concerning the characteristics of objects; e.g., "What (shape, color, size) is your name tag?"
2. Cognitive--questions about comprehension or knowledge: e.g., "What's wrong with this (picture, wagon, shoe string)?"
3. Memory--questions asking for the recall of information that was received earlier; e.g., "What did the man say when he fed the (cows, horses, ducks, and pigs)?"

4. Divergent--questions asking for several student ideas regarding the presented stimulus; e.g., "What other ways can you put these (materials, colors, shapes) together?"

5. Convergent--questions asking for a single correct response.

MATHEMATICS

Children are "naturals" with math. Working with the self-generated interest that children show for math allows the teacher an opportunity to foster a positive self-concept and to build a sense of accomplishment in the child. Children can share with adults this new-found accomplishment of counting and reasoning with math in positive experiences because adults can easily understand the beginnings of these concepts. BUILD ON THIS OPPORTUNITY TO USE THE CHILD'S NATURAL INTEREST AND ADULT/PARENT PARTICIPATION.

Children learn "best" by exploring and experimenting through their senses--seeing, touching, tasting, hearing, smelling. Children learn "better" by doing. Concepts in math must be real, include a sensory appeal, and be learned through "doing". BEGIN MATH INSTRUCTION USING CONCRETE MATERIALS/OBJECTS THAT CAN BE EXPERIENCED AND MANIPULATED.

GOALS OF MATH INSTRUCTION

UNDERSTANDING is the "key" to all math instruction for children of all ages. To build this level of understanding, the first step begins with the number/numeral awareness. Simple concepts directly taught/learned provide the foundation.

Capturing and perserving the numerical sense allows understanding of "how" math works. Illustrating concept objectives using concrete materials allows children the opportunity to physically engage with math and to build this understanding. Teaching with physical

contact makes math come alive in the eyes of the child.

MUSIC

Because of the limited verbal development of children, the natural, physical need for movement and other activities is essential. In music, these activities are singing, listening, creating, rhythmic movement, and playing instruments.

Children need quality experiences early in their lives which will enhance their mental, physical and socio-emotional growth and human potential. These experiences logically begin with movement since movement begins before the child's first breath in the outside world as he/she turns, kicks, and struggles in a mother's womb. The child's ability to turn, listen, share ideas, and feel accents and dynamic charges can be capitalized upon by the teacher by transferring this to concepts about music and intrinsic values of music through natural, enjoyable experiences.

Enjoyable experiences tend to be successful experiences, thus serving as a primary source of motivation for learning through creation of a positive self-concept.

SCIENCE

Science instruction and learning begins with the teacher who is able to provide the opportunity for students to learn about the world, and about how and where they fit into this world. Science learning broadens as each individual is given "room" to explore, discover, and experience. A child learns through "hands on." Given the opportunity to TOUCH, SEE, TASTE, SMELL, and HEAR maximizes the moment of learning. Given the opportunity to TALK WITH others about the experience completes the learning. Science becomes REAL with each

concrete "hands on"/doing experience. Children should have experiences which allow them to recognize the uniqueness of all cultures. When planning, overall goals should provide for:

1. Firsthand experience which, in turn, builds a background of experience
2. Problem-solving techniques; drawing logical conclusions
3. Understanding cause and effect
4. Observation skills
5. Identification
6. Descriptive skills
7. Classification of observations

Science instruction, to be completed, must be talked about, talked with, and talked around: DISCUSS all aspects. Teacher-initiated discussions begin with asking the right question to obtain the right answer. Teacher homework requires the teacher to jot down the questions planned to lead discussions BEFORE the lesson occurs.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Basically, children entering school have a limited understanding of themselves and their environment. For these children, for all children, the content of the social studies provides a sense of security because it is centered around them as a part of their everyday living: their social interaction within the classroom; their role in the family: and, their participation as citizens in the school, community, and nation.

An academic program for young children is very much like that of any other, for the teacher exposes a class to the basic disciplines of social science, anthropology, economics, geography, his-

tory, political science, psychology, and sociology. He/she teaches about citizenship, the family, self-awareness, conservation, acceptable behavior, transportation, job roles, events of the past, and about other cultures.

Broman emphasizes that social studies cuts across most of the subject areas and is thought of as the "glue" that bonds the elements of the curricula together for children.

Social studies is an ideal subject to teach children about the importance of people of all cultures living together and striving to understand the uniqueness of each other. Through social studies, children should learn the significance of all people making a giant effort for world peace and striving to preserve our resources.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

This material has been prepared based on the premise that each child should feel good about self no matter what his/her ability. The way a child feels about self is termed self-concept. Many minority children develop negative self-concepts in predominantly white schools.

Physical education activities are stepping stones to helping children feel good about themselves. Activities should be selected that will improve a child's interactions with others. Children will realize that movement forms an important part of life for the developing child. A child's social success hinges upon his/her ability to play well, while academic achievement rests, in a large measure, upon his/her capacities to transcribe through thoughts to paper via writing and printing efforts.

Today the world is no longer isolated. What affects one man affects all men. Communication via satellite has narrowed the scope of this planet to such an extent that global activity is now household activity, transmitted daily to man on the mountain above and the man in the valley below. It is imperative for the future, as much as it is an unquestionable need for today, that if mankind is to survive with peace, there must be a wholesome exchange of ideas among nations via multicultural education. With hope, we can go forward to address the concern that it is not too late for us of the present adult generation to reach mutual understanding worldwide based on love, respect, and understanding of the brotherhood of man. With extended hope--our children as the tomorrow that is already here--we can turn the potential of our hope into actualization by ensuring that, as Herbert Spencer once wrote, "Education has for its object the foundation of character." Multicultural Education has as its object the foundation of character, in conjunction with scholarly pursuit. If the presentation of this Multicultural Education Supplementary Curriculum has provided anyone here with a sense of one measure we can utilize to continue to face the future with wholesome exchange among each other, then our task has not been in vain. It is intended that this material will help the classroom teacher work more closely and effectively via movement with their charges. It is believed that by exposing children to skills and developmental activities which challenge, while at the same time afford success, will result in self-motivated and strenuous effort on their part. This, in turn, will lead to further development and achievement.

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